THE EYE:

BY OBADIAH OPTIC.

——*VARIOUS OBJECTS FROM THE SENSE,*
VARIOUSLY REPRESENTING. MILTON.

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Ingenuas didicisse fideliter artes
Emollit mores, nec sinit esse feros. OVID.

Education softens men's manners, and suffers not the savage to remain uncivilized.

THERE is no subject on which the public mind ought to be more attentively fixed, than the education of youth; and yet none perhaps, among us, considered as a great whole, is so evidently neglected.

In the seventh article of the Constitution of this state, it is in an imperative manner enjoined on the legislature, to establish schools throughout the state; since that injunction was given, eighteen years have nearly elapsed, and what has been done? Nothing—Petitions have been preferred, plans submited, but whether federalism or democracy preponderated, the result was the same; nothing has yet been done.

On all other subjects our legislature have progressed; they have granted lotteries, built bridges, incorporated companies, made turnpikes, and laws by the volume—but education stands still in the back ground of the picture—poor girl! she may sigh sadly to the murmuring winds! those who *ought*, heed her not, and those who *would*, have not the power.

In Europe, it is by no means strange, that great men are opposed to the general diffusion of knowledge, because ignorance is the most stable foundation for despotic power and usurpation. The enlightened mind rises in opposition to the lawless, arbitrary mandate, the chains of slavery are despised, nay, even her scourges, her tortures, her banishments, by the man of education, are only looked on with contempt, not fear; yet, as long as they can keep a majority

of their subjects in ignorance, they bind them to their service, and, although in the form of man, treat them as brute beasts.

Surely the same views do not here obtain a place, we have no hereditary titles to support, no exclusive privileges to obtain; but on the contrary, ought to be stimulated to promote education with all our might, since every American citizen is in himself simply considered constitutionally entitled to fill any station in the government of his country. Surely, if a stimulus had been wanting to invite to active exertion in obtaining useful learning, this one might have been considered as very powerful, yet it has not produced the desired effects. It is rather degrading to us as a people, to find in our public offices, men, who though possessed I trust of good hearts, and many of them of strong natural judgments, are incapable of writing a single sentence grammatically.

Let us examine from what source this ignorance flows, and perhaps we may suggest a remedy.

No doubt a great portion of this ignorance flows from the inattention of parents, not taking those proper steps in the education of their children which would absolutely insure success. In this city we can find a number of active boys, at least fifteen years of age, who have been kept at school since they could walk, and yet are as ignorant about grammar, geography, &c. as they are about the great Mogul; the child is examined, the parents astonished; the boy knows nothing—nay, cannot even find a word in the dictionary. Parents, ye are to blame; you kept your child at a school, if it deserves that name, in which these things were never taught, and could not be taught, because the teacher himself was *ignorant:* Is it possible that a man who has been bred to some mechanical employment and who never received a genteel education, nay, who is scarcely acquainted with the first rudiments, can immediately become illuminated in such an extraordinary degree as to be competent to instruct youth and lead them through all the intricate paths of science! Parents, you are to blame—It is my serious opinion that no person ought to be permitted to open school in the city of Philadelphia, unless found on examination, capable of truly teaching that branch he professes; for this purpose I offer the following scheme for the consideration of my fellow citizens:—

PLAN FOR CHOOSING SCHOOL MASTERS.

At the election held according to law for the choice of constables in each year, let two citizens of distinguished moral

character and good learning be elected in each ward, these would form a body of twenty-eight members, whereof say fifteen should be a quorum to do business; of this body it should be the bounden duty to superintend education generally, but in a special manner to see that no person presumed to open or keep a school in this city without a written licence signed by a majority of the superintendants; and each of the superintendants previously to his entering on the duties of his appointment, on oath or affirmation before the mayor of the city, should declare that party politics should never operate with him to give a vote *against* or in *favour* of an applicant, but that he should ever be determined by learning, abilities, and good moral conduct.

If such a system as this were pursued, would we not have a greater chance of having our children better educated than we have at present, and in doing something of this kind all assuredly would be benefited; have we not a right to complain; the diversity of books variety of methods, injudicious modes of treatment, the nature of tasks and the parade of exhibitions, all demand reform; parents, the appeal is made to you; as a parent I feel deeply interested; but if I judge right of my own heart, I feel more for the public good. In a few years, the writer of this, perhaps in a few days, shall be no more, and you also will pass off the stage; and pray who then will stand forward to assert rights and preserve their independence?—Our children—O then, let us, while we live, endeavour to make them worthy of the sacred deposit we shall place in their hands; let us open their minds by the power of education, teach them what they owe to themselves, to society, and what they owe to GOD. OBADIAH OPTIC.

ORIGINAL.

THE TORTOISE.—No. X.

May the chain of our friendship be kept so bright, as that a little child may find it when the sun is asleep in his blanket behind the western hills. INDIAN TALK.

FEW subjects have been more discussed by essayists than that of friendship; yet however it may have been represented in theory, still it is little understood, except by those

whose hearts are impressed with its stamp. The idea advanced in my motto, is certainly original, as it is expressed by a son of nature, and points to the extent of this principle; here, friendship is recognized as unalienable property, ceasing not with the life of those who first form the contract, but descending with the stream of time to posterity, ever shining in acts of love and offices of benevolence, the motives for the exercise of which, though perhaps undefinable, are nevertheless known, to those interested, by intuitive perception: It is a chain of countless links, and if strengthened by divine charity, embraces the whole human race; it adds to the happiness of both him who receives and him who gives, and is perfectly disinterested: As a being, if its personification is admissible, it acts as the tutelary guardian of those who are influenced by its power; faithful to its trust, it never forsakes the object of its care, but accompanying him through life, guards him from the snares of vice, supports him in the vale of adversity, admonishes him in the days of prosperity, and soothes him in the hour of adversity.—"Without a friend," says a writer, "the world is but a wilderness,"—desolate indeed to him whose mind is formed for society: "A man may have a thousand intimate acquaintances, but not a friend amongst them all:" Flatterers are numerous, but their attachments are ephemeral in their nature, glittering but transient—their objects accomplished, they would rear the pillar of their prosperity on the ruin of him who was the means of their advancement; this, though degrading to humanity, is too frequently observable. True friends, on the contrary, seek each other's happiness, and the promotion of the one is ever productive of pleasure to the other; a disinterested manner characterises their conduct; errors, when discovered, are not emblazoned to the disadvantage of him who commits them; he is kindly reproved, whilst the monitor casts a veil of candour over the imperfections of his friend and hides them from those who delight in discord; their intercourse with each other and commerce with the world is such as is well calculated to keep bright the golden chain, so that their posterity shall look at it with reverence, esteeming it precious; and thus does it become effective in harmonizing families to distant generations, when the spirits of those who first formed the sacred contract are reunited in the bright mansions of progressive felicity and their bodies sleep in the silent tomb. TIM TITULAR.

SELECTED.

REFLECTIONS ON AGRICULTURE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EYE.

MR. OPTIC,

HAVING read the following reflections on a science coeval with the creation of man, I was so well pleased with the manner in which the writer treats the subject, and believing they would be equally interesting to many of your readers, I have selected them for publication in the 'Eye.' *Should you coincide with me in opinion that essays of this nature are useful in a country so well calculated by nature, and by its goverment for agricultural improvements, please to insert them.* *Tour's* *R. B.*

Still, as with grateful change the seasons pass,
New scenes arise, new landscapes strike the eye,
And all th' enliven'd country beautify;
Gay plains extend where marshes slept before;
O'er recent meads th' exulting streamlets fly;
Dark frowning heaths grow bright with Ceres' store,
And woods imbrown the steep, or wave along the shore.

THOMSON.

AGRICULTURE may, with great propriety, be styled the nearest neighbour, or rather next in kindred to Philosophy. Its principles, says Varro, are the same which Ennius makes to be the principles of all nature, earth, water, air, and the sun. It certainly comprehends more parts of philosophy than any one profession, art or science in the world. There is no other kind of life that can furnish a panegyrist with such an inexhaustible subject of eulogy, whether we attend to its universal utility, and to that necessity which renders it the first of arts, or to the innocence and pleasure of the employment, its antiquity and dignity. Hence, this art has been cultivated by many of the greatest men among the ancients, and treated of by their most celebrated writers. One of their best philosophers and noblest poets, the immortal Mantuan bard, was himself a most admirable husbandman.

With respect to the utility of this art, if we take a retrospect of the most remote ages, we shall find, that to the necessity of it, we owe the first foundation of society and order; the establishment of property; the consequent introduction of civilization, and all the humanizing arts of life. This is finely illustrated by a writer, not less distinguished for elegance of composition, than for acuteness, discrimination, and perspicacity. "In the beginning of the world," says he, "we are in-

formed by holy writ, the All-bountiful CREATOR gave to man dominion over all the earth; and over the fish of the sea, fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth." This is the only true and solid foundation of man's dominion over external things, whatever airy metaphysical notions may have been started by fanciful writers upon this subject. The earth therefore, and all things therein, are the general property of all mankind, exclusive of other beings, from the immediate gift of the CREATOR. And while the earth continued bare of inhabitants, it is reasonable to suppose, that all was in common with them, and that every one took from the public stock, to his own use, such things as his immediate necessities required.

"These general notions of property were then sufficient to answer all the puposes of human life; and might perhaps still have answered them had it been possible for mankind to have remained in a state of primeval simplicity; as may be collected from the manners of many American nations when first discovered by the Europeans; and from the ancient method of living among the first Europeans themselves, if we may credit either the memorials of them preserved in the golden age of the poets, or the uniform accounts given by historians of those times, wherein '*erant omnia communia et indivisa omnibus, veluti unum cunctis patrimonium esset.*'* Not that this communion of goods seems ever to have been applicable, even in the earliest ages to aught but the *substance* of the thing; nor could it be extended to the *use* of it. For, by the law of nature and reason, he who first began to use it, acquired therein a kind of transient property, that lasted so long as he was using it, and no longer; or, to speak with greater precision, the *right* of possession continued for the same time only that the *act* of possession lasted. The ground was in common, and no part of it was the permanent property of any man in particular; yet, whoever was in the occupation of any determinate spot of it, for rest, for shade, or the like, acquired for the time a sort of ownership, from which it would have been unjust, and contrary to the law of nature, to have driven him by force; but the instant he quitted the use or occupation of it, another might seize it without injustice. Thus also a vine or other tree might be said to be in common, as all men were equally entitled to its produce, and yet any individual might gain the sole

* All things were common and undivided, as a patrimony in which all the family are equally interested.

property of the fruit, which he gathered for his own use. A doctrine well illustrated by Cicero, who compares the world to a great theatre, which is common to the public, and yet the place which any man has taken is for the time his own.

"But when mankind increased in number, craft, and ambition, it became necessary to entertain conceptions of more permanent dominion; and to appropriate to individuals not the immediate *use* only, but the very *substance* of the thing to be used. Otherwise innumerable tumults must have arisen, and the good order of the world continually broken and disturbed, while a variety of persons were striving who should get the first occupation of the same thing, or disputing which of them had actually gained it. As human life also grew more and more refined, abundance of conveniences were devised to render it more easy, commodious, and agreeable; as, habitations for shelter and safety, and raiment for warmth and decency. But no man would be at the trouble to provide either, so long as he had only an usufructuary property in them, which was to cease the instant that he quitted possession;—if, as soon as he walked out of his tent, or pulled off his garment, the next stranger who came by would have a right to inhabit the one and wear the other. In the case of habitation in particular, it is natural to observe, that even the brute creation, to whom every thing else was in common, maintained a kind of permanent property in their dwellings, especially for the protection of their young; that the birds of the air had nests, and the beasts of the field had caverns, the invasion of which they esteemed a very flagrant injustice, and would sacrifice their lives to preserve them. Hence, a property was soon established in every man's home and homestall; which seems to have been originally mere temporary huts, or moveable cabins, suited to the design of Providence for the more speedy peopling the earth, and suited to the wandering life of their owners, before any extensive property in the soil or ground was established. And there can be no doubt, but that moveables of every kind became sooner appropriated than the permanent substantial soil: Partly, because they were more susceptible of a long occupancy, which might be continued months together without any sensible interruptions, and at length by usage ripen into an established right; but principally because few of them could be fit for use, till improved and meliorated by the bodily labour of the occupant; which bodily labour, bestowed upon any subject which

before lay in common to all men, is universally allowed to give the fairest and most reasonable title to an exclusive property therein.

"The article of food was a more immediate call, and therefore a more early consideration. Such as were not contented with the spontaneous product of the earth, sought for a more solid refreshment in the flesh of beasts, which they got by hunting. But the frequent disappointments incident to that method of provision, induced them to gather such animals as were of a more tame and sequacious nature; and to establish a permanent property in their flocks and herds, in order to sustain themselves in a less precarious manner, partly by the milk of the dams, and partly by the flesh of the young. The support of these their cattle made the article of *water* also a very important point. And therefore the book of Genesis, the most venerable monument of antiquity, will furnish us with frequent instances of violent contentions concerning wells; the exclusive property of which appears to have been established in the first digger or occupant, even in such places where the ground and herbage remained yet in common. Thus we find Abraham, who was but a sojourner, asserting his right to a well in the country of Abimelech, and exacting an oath for his security, 'because he had digged that well.'* And Isaac, about ninety years afterwards, reclaimed this his father's property; and, after much contention with the Philistines, was suffered to enjoy it in peace.†

(to be continued)

SELECTED.

THE DUELIST AND LIBERTINE RECLAIMED.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE EYE.

MR. OPTIC,

I HAVE read in your paper, with much satisfaction, "A Tale without a Name," *and have no doubt it has given pleasure to your readers generally; as it is now concluded, and if you are not better supplied, please to give a place to the following selection, if it meets your approbation.* *MARIA.*

ANTONIO was born and educated in the circle of the polite world, and being naturally of a gay disposition, and possessed of an immense fortune, early launched into all the extravagances of the age. His passions, instead of being

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* Gen. xxi. 30. † Gen. xxvi. 15, 18, &c.

governed by the cool dictates of reason, triumphed over it; and he considered those as his greatest enemies, who dared, in any manner, to oppose them. This conduct deprived him of the advice of the serious part of mankind, reason was subdued, and he had now no other advisers than those whose vices had entitled them to his acquaintance; I will not say *friendship*, as those intimacies arising from a similarity of vices, deserve not that sacred title.

A rule observed by Antonio and his companions in excess, was, never to overlook an affront; and if any one dared to resent their insolence, or call them to account for injuries committed, to tell them they were at liberty to demand an honourable satisfaction.

This often engaged them in quarrels, and there were few members of this worthy association, who had not been concerned in several affairs of honour;—thus hazarding their lives in support of a shadow, the substance of which they had long forfeited.

Antonio being of a disposition which could ill brook affronts, had more than once proved himself worthy their society, by meeting his opponent on the ground, which has so often proved fatal to the votaries of *modern honour*.

His aunt now dying and leaving him a large estate at a village in ********, he was under the necessity of leaving for a while the gay town, and his dear companions.

In this village he continued some weeks, during which time he became acquainted at the house of a gentleman, whose fortune raised him above dependence, enabled him, in his calm retreat, to taste all the blessings of life, and by his bounty, to relieve the wants of his distressed neighbours.

His family consisted of a son and daughter, who were the pride and comfort of his age. The son, who was an officer in the army, was of a brave, humane, and generous temper. Though he had the courage to face the enemies of his country, and, by his gallant behaviour, had gained the esteem of his commander, thought it no disgrace to pay the tribute of a tear to the miseries of his fellow creatures. In short, his composition was such as did honour to his profession, and to humanity. The daughter, whose name was Alicia, was endowed with such elegance of form, and sweetness of disposition, as raised the admiration, and secured the ssteem of all who knew her.

Such a beauty did not long fail of raising a flame in the bosom of Antonio, but it was not of that pure and generous kind, which consults the happiness and welfare of its object, and which such an object ought to have inspired; his libertine principles, which had been for a while suppressed, began to revive, and he resolved to leave no means, however base, untried to obtain his wishes.

As he had, ever since his arrival, behaved in the most friendly and discreet manner, he was greatly esteemed by the whole family, the fair Alicia not excepted, to whom he now began to double his attention, expressed a sincere regard, and strove with the utmost assiduity, to ingratiate himself in her favour, knowing that the affections must be gained before virtue like her's could be, with any prospect of success, attacked.

When he thought himself secure of those, he began to consider on the most likely method of accomplishing his design, and at length, by the most complicated plan of villany, triumphed over one, whose virtue had ever been her greatest pride.

He now returned in triumph to his dissolute companions, from whom he received the highest applause for so bold and successful an attack.

Alicia, when she recovered her senses, which she had been by art deprived of, was with difficulty prevented from putting a period to that life which she no longer prized. Her father, while the tears trickled down his venerable cheek, endeavoured to administer that comfort he himself stood in need of, told her, "he still considered her as innocent, and intreated her not to think of robbing him of a life, which was dearer to him than his own."

Her brother too endeavoured to sooth her sorrow, and mingled his tears with her's; yet his bosom burned with desire of revenge, and he resolved, as soon as possible, (without discovering his intentions) to gratify it.

After waiting a few days to prevent suspicion, he pretended to have received an order from his colonel to join his regiment immediately. The next morning, after taking leave of his father, affectionately embracing his sister, and assuring her she should ever find in him a friend and protector, he departed.

The hopes of revenge added to his speed, and he reached the city the same evening.

Immediately on his arrival, he dispatched a note to Antonio, demanding satisfaction for the injury done to his sister, and telling him, if he wished to avoid having the name of *coward* added to that of *villain*, he would, with his second, not fail meeting him at 10 o'clock the next morning.

The challenge was accepted, and their coaches happened to arrive at the same instant.

Antonio and Cornelius, (which was the name of Alicia's brother) alighted, and with their seconds were entering the field, when they were met by Candidus, an old officer, well known to both parties—who, having observed the manner of their arrival, and perceiving a discomposure in their countenances, suspected their intentions.

This officer, though he possessed the most undaunted courage, and had signalized himself in the service of his country, prizing his honour more than life, was so far from approving the sentiments of modern honour, that he viewed them with the utmost detestation and horror. *(to be concluded.)*

ANECDOTES.

AVARICE was a peculiar characteristic of the ancient Carthagenians; for the gratification of which, regard was not had to means, however disreputable, or derogating from the principles of honour or honesty. The following anecdote is related in Rollin's history:

"A mountebank had promised the people of Carthage to discover to them their most secret thoughts, in case they would come on a day appointed, to hear him. Being all met he told them they were desirous to *buy cheap* and *sell dear*. Every man's conscience pleaded guilty to the charge; and the mountebank was dismissed with laughter and applause."

SUWARROW took every opportunity of attending the offices of public devotion; and has been known, on Sundays or festivals to deliver lectures on piety to them whom duty called to attend on him. It happened that one evening he overheard a captain abridge the prayer which his duty required him to repeat at the guard.—The fieldmarshal called out to him, "Thou unconscionable, abominable, impious man, thou wouldest cheat Heaven. Thou wouldest no doubt, cheat likewise the empress and me! I shall dismiss thee."

Poetical Department.

ORIGINAL.

FANCY—REASON—FAITH.

THY silken wings gay *Fancy* lend,
Whilst I to yonder sky ascend,
And ambulate the starry fields;
Thence look on this terraqu'ous globe,
Enveloped in the shining robe
Which Sol's resplendent brightness yields.

Say, *Reason*, can the human eye,
From such a distant point descry,
This little world, a glittering sphere?
Ah no! but *Fancy* can with ease,
Shape ev'ry object as we please,
And make them bright appear.

Then *Reason* give to *Fancy* place,
And let me soar thro' ambient space,
Exploring suns and worlds unseen!
Now, lost in wonder and delight,
My mind pursues th' advent'rous flight,
Nor deigns to heed thy smile serene.

Lo! now I view a central sun,
'Round which innum'rous planets run
Their steady course the various year,
As each may in the vortex stand,
Its station fix'd—th' Omniscient hand
Supports their sun and moves each sphere.

But now, on *Fancy's* wings, no more
Presumpt'ously my mind would soar,
Nor with unhallow'd thoughts profane
The sacred myst'ries hid from man;
But *Reason*, all the wond'rous plan
And motives of thy GOD explain.—

——Hah! cannot *Reason* comprehend?
Doth it her noble pow'rs transcend?
Then what is man!—I'll think no more
That Nature's light is all that's giv'n
To raise th' aspiring soul to heav'n;
But *Nature's* GOD in *Faith* adore! ALICIAN.